A/65/21

United Nations

Report of the Committee on Information

Thirty-second session (26 April-7 May 2010)

General Assembly
Official Records
Sixty-fifth Session
Supplement No. 21

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Note

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Chapter I
Introduction

1. In its resolution 34/182, the General Assembly decided to maintain the Committee to Review United Nations Public Information Policies and Activities, established by its resolution 33/115 C, to henceforth be known as the Committee on Information, and to increase the membership of the Committee from 41 to 66. In the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Committee:

(a) To continue to examine United Nations public information policies and activities, in the light of the evolution of international relations, particularly during the past two decades, and of the imperatives of the establishment of the new international economic order and of a new world information and communication order;

(b) To evaluate and follow up the efforts made and the progress achieved by the United Nations system in the field of information and communications;

(c) To promote the establishment of a new, more just and more effective world information and communication order intended to strengthen peace and international understanding and based on the free circulation and wider and better balanced dissemination of information and to make recommendations thereon to the General Assembly.

The Assembly requested the Committee and the Secretary-General to report to it at its thirty-fifth session.

2. In its resolution 35/201, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Committee on Information, approved the report of the Committee and the recommendations of its Ad Hoc Working Group, reaffirmed the mandate given to the Committee in Assembly resolution 34/182, and decided to increase the membership of the Committee from 66 to 67. At its organizational session in 1980, the Committee agreed that the principle of geographical rotation would be applied to all the officers of the Committee and that they should be elected for two-year terms of office.

3. The General Assembly, from its thirty-sixth to sixty-third sessions, took note of the reports of the Committee and adopted consensus resolutions. At its sixty-fourth session, the Assembly took note of the report of the Committee and adopted consensus resolutions 64/96 A and B.

4. The Committee is currently composed of the following Member States:

Algeria	Bangladesh
Angola	Belarus
Antigua and Barbuda	Belgium
Argentina	Belize
Armenia	Benin
Austria	Brazil
Azerbaijan	Bulgaria

Burkina Faso
Burundi
Cape Verde
Chile
China
Colombia
Costa Rica
Côte d'Ivoire
Croatia
Cuba
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Denmark
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Gabon
Georgia
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Guinea
Guyana
Hungary
Iceland
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Ireland
Israel
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kazakhstan
Kenya
Lebanon
Liberia
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Luxembourg
Madagascar
Malta
Mexico
Monaco
Mongolia
Morocco
Mozambique
Nepal
Netherlands
Niger
Nigeria
Pakistan
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Qatar
Republic of Korea
Republic of Moldova

Romania	Syrian Arab Republic
Russian Federation	Thailand
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Togo
Saudi Arabia	Trinidad and Tobago
Senegal	Tunisia
Sierra Leone	Turkey
Singapore	Ukraine
Slovakia	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Solomon Islands	United Republic of Tanzania
Somalia	United States of America
South Africa	Uruguay
Spain	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Sri Lanka	Viet Nam
Sudan	Yemen
Suriname	Zambia
Switzerland	Zimbabwe

Chapter II
Organizational questions

A. Opening of the session

5. The organizational meeting of the thirty-second session of the Committee on Information was held on 26 April 2010 at United Nations Headquarters. The session was opened by the Chair of the Committee, Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima (Cape Verde).

B. Election of officers

6. Following the departure of Irakli Chikovani (Georgia), Vice-Chair, from the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations, Shalva Tsiskarashvili (Georgia) was elected to serve as a Vice-Chair for the remainder of the 2009-2010 term. The officers of the Committee on Information for the period 2009-2010 are as follows:

Chair:
Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima (Cape Verde)

Vice-Chairs:
Stéphane Crouzat (France)
Amir Hossein Hosseini (Islamic Republic of Iran)
Shalva Tsiskarashvili (Georgia)

Rapporteur:
Sheree Chambers (Jamaica)

C. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

7. At its organizational meeting on 26 April, the Committee adopted the following agenda and programme of work (A/AC.198/2010/1):

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
4. Admission of new members.
5. Statement by the Chair.
6. Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information.
7. General debate.
8. Consideration of reports submitted by the Secretary-General.
9. Open-ended working group of the Committee on Information.
10. Consideration and adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session.

8. The Committee held its general debate from 26 to 28 April 2010. On 26 April, in the afternoon, the Department of Public Information, led by its Under-Secretary-General, held an interactive dialogue with representatives of Member States.

9. For its consideration of agenda item 8, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information: strategic communications services (A/AC.198/2010/2);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information: news services (A/AC.198/2010/3);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information: outreach services (A/AC.198/2010/4).

In addition, the Committee considered the proposed biennial programme plan of the Department of Public Information for the period 2012-2013 (A/65/6 (Prog. 23)).

D. Observers

10. The Holy See, Palestine and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) participated in the session as observers.

Chapter III
General debate

11. Statements in the general debate were made by the following States members of the Committee on Information: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Chile (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Rio Group), China, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Spain (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union), the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, the United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China) and Zambia. The Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine, in its capacity as observer, also made a statement. The general debate was preceded by statements made by the Chair of the Committee and the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat.

12. In taking up the substantive questions before the Committee, speakers emphasized the central role of the United Nations in global affairs and of the Department of Public Information as its public voice. One speaker, addressing the Committee on behalf of a large group, said that his group believed that close cooperation and partnership between the Department and the Committee on Information had always been the cornerstone of the Department's policies on public information. Describing the Department as a public voice to promote the purposes and image of the United Nations, he called for strengthening that partnership. The Organization was a universal forum where the world community could hold debates on many concerns. However, many countries, especially in the developing world, lacked the resources and technical means to access information on United Nations activities and achievements. The Department, therefore, had a challenging task in reaching the widest possible audience on issues of particular interest to the group. Such issues, according to the speaker, included decolonization, peacekeeping, disarmament, human rights, sustainable development, poverty eradication, climate change, the Millennium Development Goals, dialogue among civilizations, the follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society and the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

13. Another speaker, also addressing the Committee on behalf of a large group, said that the mission of the Department was to broaden an understanding of the work of the United Nations among the widest possible audience. The role of the Department, and consequently that of the Committee on Information, he said, was to reach the international public with information on challenges that could be jointly identified and measures that everyone could agree on.

14. One speaker, representing a large group, noted that members of his group widely recognized the valuable efforts of the Department in promoting and achieving a better understanding of the objectives and work of the United Nations in a wide variety of issues of high importance and interest for the international community. Another speaker acknowledged that the Department had helped to make many United Nations activities a resounding success. Her country continued to

encourage the head of the Department to identify ways to improve coordination, efficiency and integration of public information activities throughout the Organization, and welcomed his efforts to achieve the greatest public impact with the greatest efficiency.

15. Several speakers discussed the role of new information and communications technologies, including new media, in promoting the work of the United Nations. One speaker remarked that information was no longer bound by traditional borders, which was why his country supported the Department's expansion into new media and technologies. According to another speaker, the dizzying revolution of information and communications technology had greatly contributed to the understanding of United Nations endeavours, but that it was necessary to strike a balance between traditional and new communications media so as not to accentuate disparities between the North and South. He emphasized that in Africa, vast segments of society drew no benefit from the rise in new technologies, and for that reason, the Digital Solidarity Fund, the main instrument for closing the North-South digital divide, should have greater visibility. Another speaker called for the establishment of a new world order of information for the purpose of creating a fairer and more equitable world based on mutual respect underpinned by United Nations principles. Disseminating a culture of peace, tolerance and dialogue between civilizations was particularly important to bring about and maintain peace, he said. Another speaker, while supporting the continued advance of information and communications technologies, suggested that a code of conduct should be designed to regulate information flows, because the media could be misused as a tool for expansionist policies and the promotion of certain cultures to the detriment of others. Another speaker stated that his group emphasized the importance of continuing the use of traditional media for disseminating the main messages of the United Nations as that was still the primary means of communication in many developing countries.

16. Several speakers emphasized the importance of freedom of the press and freedom of expression. One speaker, representing a large group of countries, observed that it was of paramount importance for all Member States to adhere fully to their commitments to guarantee full respect for freedom of expression and access to information and to ensure unhindered freedom of the press. Another speaker, noting that 3 May was World Press Freedom Day, emphasized that it was important for the Committee on Information to recall article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which affirmed the right of everyone to freedom of expression. That right included the freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers, she said.

17. Many speakers emphasized the need for achieving linguistic parity in the work of the Department. One speaker, speaking on behalf of a large group, pointed out that the Secretary-General in his report to the Committee had acknowledged that there existed a possibility of a growing gap in the use of Spanish on the United Nations website as compared with English. Noting that one of the most important goals for his group was to achieve parity among the six official languages, he called for the dissemination of information, particularly over the radio, in as many languages as possible, including Portuguese. Another speaker, echoing those sentiments, noted that in order to ensure that people were reached all over the world, it was important for the United Nations to broadcast information not just in the six

official languages, but also in other languages. Another speaker observed that in order to achieve parity among the United Nations official languages, the Arabic section should be placed on equal footing with the others, through a strengthening of its work. He also expressed deep concern about the decline in the use of Arabic, particularly in radio broadcasts, which were an important tool in disseminating the Organization's media messages in villages, communities and regions that did not have access to complex technical media. One speaker also lauded the United Nations information centres for producing information in some 80 local languages and United Nations Radio for producing programmes in Bangla, Hindi and Urdu, among other languages.

18. Several speakers underscored the importance of closer cooperation between the Department of Public Information, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. One speaker, noting that his country was the largest troop-contributing country, said that peacekeeping was challenging but also had success stories, which should be shared with the world. Another speaker, acknowledging the work of the Department in promoting the work of United Nations peacekeeping, called for sustained and improved efforts to more effectively project to the public, particularly in troop-contributing countries, the important role of peacekeepers in keeping the peace in conflict areas overseas. Another speaker, also calling for a sustained focus on peacekeeping operations, noted that increased communications capability had helped to inform Member States of the needs of Haiti after the earthquake and had guided the participation of Member States in the response. He also lauded the Department for coming out with a steady stream of media releases targeting audiences in more than 30 troop-contributing countries.

19. Several speakers commented on the special information programme of the Department of Public Information on the question of Palestine. One speaker, representing a large group, said that programme was meaningful to his group. Commending the annual training programme given by the Department for Palestinian media professionals from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, he reiterated the need for the continuation of those and other activities, and called for their further enhancement. One speaker noted that until recently there had been a specific link on the United Nations home page for the "question of Palestine", but it had been removed and replaced by a link to the "situation in the Middle East" on the home page, news pages and news focus pages. He hoped the Department would consider restoring the original link on the United Nations home page. Another speaker encouraged the Department to keep addressing the plight of Palestinians, bearing in mind the suffering of those people.

20. Most speakers commended the work of the United Nations information centres and called for their operations to be strengthened. One speaker, addressing the Committee on behalf of a large group, noted that his group saw the centres as vital in bridging the gap between developed and developing countries in terms of access to information and communications technology. The group underlined that any decision pertaining to the reorganization of the centres must be made in close consultation with host countries and must take account of the geographical, linguistic and technological characters and needs of different regions.

21. Another speaker, also representing a large group, welcomed steps taken towards cooperation among the centres worldwide, which held a promise of savings without limiting capacity to pay attention to local specifics. In that regard, he looked

forward to seeing further progress in the multilingual activities of the information centres. He noted that the current capacity of the centres in disseminating information in local languages was an impressive example and should be built on in a cost-effective manner, including through partnerships with non-governmental organizations and academic institutions. Several speakers also welcomed the establishment of a centre in Luanda to address the needs of Portuguese-speaking African countries. According to one speaker, the establishment of that centre was an important stimulus to peace consolidation in Angola, and could also serve to strengthen democracy and battle poverty and social exclusion.

22. The issue of budgetary constraints faced by United Nations information centres was also addressed by some speakers. One speaker, calling upon the Department of Public Information to strengthen, and not weaken, the information centres, emphasized that adequate budgetary resources must be made available to strengthen public outreach and ensure the effective functioning of the information centre network. Another speaker encouraged all Member States in a position to do so to offer rent-free premises for information centres.

23. The Committee took note of the views expressed by a group of Member States on the need to streamline the resolution on questions relating to information, and welcomed the offer by the Group of 77 and China to engage in an informal exchange of views in order to produce, as appropriate, a revised text at least two weeks before the opening of the thirty-third session of the Committee.

Chapter IV

Preparation and adoption of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session

24. At its sixth plenary meeting, the Committee on Information proceeded to adopt its draft report, including two draft resolutions, by consensus. A text, submitted by the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, formed the basis of negotiations for a draft resolution, which involved two negotiating groups, the Group of 77 and China and the European Union, as well as other Member States.

Questions relating to information

Draft resolution A
Information in the service of humanity

The General Assembly,

Taking note of the comprehensive and important report of the Committee on Information,[1]

Taking note also of the report of the Secretary-General on questions relating to information,[2]

Urges all countries, organizations of the United Nations system as a whole and all others concerned, reaffirming their commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to the principles of freedom of the press and freedom of information, as well as to those of the independence, pluralism and diversity of the media, deeply concerned by the disparities existing between developed and developing countries and the consequences of every kind arising from those disparities that affect the capability of the public, private or other media and individuals in developing countries to disseminate information and communicate their views and their cultural and ethical values through endogenous cultural production, as well as to ensure the diversity of sources and their free access to information, and recognizing the call in this context for what in the United Nations and at various international forums has been termed "a new world information and communication order, seen as an evolving and continuous process":

(a) To cooperate and interact with a view to reducing existing disparities in information flows at all levels by increasing assistance for the development of communications infrastructures and capabilities in developing countries, with due regard for their needs and the priorities attached to such areas by those countries, and in order to enable them and the public, private or other media in developing countries to develop their own information and communications policies freely and independently and increase the participation of media and individuals in the communication process, and to ensure a free flow of information at all levels;

(b) To ensure for journalists the free and effective performance of their professional tasks and condemn resolutely all attacks against them;

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[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 21* (A/65/21).

[2] A/65/___.

(c) To provide support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes for broadcasters and journalists from public, private and other media in developing countries;

(d) To enhance regional efforts and cooperation among developing countries, as well as cooperation between developed and developing countries, to strengthen communications capacities and to improve the media infrastructure and communications technology in the developing countries, especially in the areas of training and dissemination of information;

(e) To aim at, in addition to bilateral cooperation, providing all possible support and assistance to the developing countries and their media, public, private or other, with due regard to their interests and needs in the field of information and to action already adopted within the United Nations system, including:

(i) The development of the human and technical resources that are indispensable for the improvement of information and communications systems in developing countries and support for the continuation and strengthening of practical training programmes, such as those already operating under both public and private auspices throughout the developing world;

(ii) The creation of conditions that will enable developing countries and their media, public, private or other, to have, by using their national and regional resources, the communications technology suited to their national needs, as well as the necessary programme material, especially for radio and television broadcasting;

(iii) Assistance in establishing and promoting telecommunication links at the subregional, regional and interregional levels, especially among developing countries;

(iv) The facilitation, as appropriate, of access by the developing countries to advanced communications technology available on the open market;

(f) To provide full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,[3] which should support both public and private media.

Draft resolution B
United Nations public information policies and activities

The General Assembly,

Emphasizing that the Committee on Information is its main subsidiary body mandated to make recommendations to it relating to the work of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat,

Emphasizing also that the contents of public information and communications should be placed at the heart of the strategic management of the United Nations and

[3] See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Twenty-first Session, Belgrade, 23 September-28 October 1980*, vol. 1, *Resolutions*, sect. III.4, resolution 4/21.

that a culture of communications and transparency should permeate all levels of the Organization, as a means of fully informing the peoples of the world of the aims and activities of the United Nations, in accordance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in order to create broad-based global support for the United Nations,

Stressing that the primary mission of the Department of Public Information is to provide, through its outreach activities, accurate, impartial, comprehensive, balanced, timely and relevant information to the public on the tasks and responsibilities of the United Nations in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization with the greatest transparency,

Recalling the comprehensive review of the work of the Department of Public Information, requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/253 of 24 December 2001, as well as the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change"[4] and Assembly resolutions 57/300 of 20 December 2002 and 60/109 B of 8 December 2005, which provided an opportunity to take due steps to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department and to maximize the use of its resources,

Expressing its concern that the gap in information and communications technology between the developed and the developing countries has continued to widen and that vast segments of the population in developing countries are not benefiting from the present information and communications technologies, and, in this regard, underlining the necessity of rectifying the imbalances in the present development of information and communications technologies in order to make it more just, equitable and effective,

Recognizing that developments in information and communications technologies open vast new opportunities for economic growth and social development and can play an important role in the eradication of poverty in developing countries, and, at the same time, emphasizing that the development of these technologies poses challenges and risks and could lead to the further widening of disparities between and within countries,

Recalling its resolution 63/306 of 9 September 2009 on multilingualism, and emphasizing the importance of making appropriate use of the official languages of the United Nations in the activities of the Department of Public Information, with the aim of eliminating the disparity between the use of English and the five other official languages,

I
Introduction

1. *Reaffirms* its resolution 13 (I) of 13 February 1946, in which it established the Department of Public Information, with a view to promoting to the greatest possible extent an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world, and all other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly related to the activities of the Department, and requests the Secretary-General, in respect of the public information policies and activities of the United Nations, to continue to implement fully the recommendations contained in

[4] A/57/387 and Corr.1.

paragraph 2 of its resolution 48/44 B of 10 December 1993 and other mandates as established by the General Assembly;

2. *Also reaffirms* that the United Nations remains the indispensable foundation of a peaceful and just world and that its voice must be heard in a clear and effective manner, and emphasizes the essential role of the Department of Public Information in this context;

3. *Stresses* the importance of the provision of clear, timely, accurate and comprehensive information by the Secretariat to Member States, upon their request, within the framework of existing mandates and procedures;

4. *Reaffirms* the central role of the Committee on Information in United Nations public information policies and activities, including the prioritization of those activities, and decides that recommendations relating to the programme of the Department of Public Information shall originate, to the extent possible, in the Committee and shall be considered by the Committee;

5. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, following the priorities laid down by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/247 of 24 December 2008, and guided by the United Nations Millennium Declaration[5] and recalling the 2005 World Summit,[6] to pay particular attention to peace and security, development and human rights and to major issues such as the eradication of poverty, including the global food crisis, conflict prevention, sustainable development, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and the needs of the African continent;

6. *Also requests* the Department of Public Information to pay particular attention to progress in implementing the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and the outcomes of the major related United Nations summits and conferences in carrying out its activities, and calls upon the Department to play an active role in raising public awareness of the world financial and economic crisis and its impact on development, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;

7. *Further requests* the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to play an active role in raising public awareness of the global challenge of climate change, and encourages the Department to pay particular attention to the actions taken in the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[7] in accordance with the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities, especially in the context of the Conference of the Parties and of the Meetings of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol[8] held in Copenhagen from 7 to 19 December 2009, and to be held in Cancun, Mexico, from 29 November to 10 December 2010;

8. *Reaffirms* the need to enhance the technological infrastructure of the Department of Public Information on a continuous basis in order to widen its outreach and to continue to improve the United Nations website;

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[5] See resolution 55/2.

[6] See resolution 60/1.

[7] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[8] FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3, annex.

II
General activities of the Department of Public Information

9. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information;[9]

10. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to maintain its commitment to a culture of evaluation and to continue to evaluate its products and activities with the objective of enhancing their effectiveness, and to continue to cooperate and coordinate with Member States and the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the Secretariat;

11. *Reaffirms* the importance of more effective coordination between the Department of Public Information and the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure consistency in the messages of the Organization;

12. *Notes* the efforts of the Department of Public Information to continue to publicize the work and decisions of the General Assembly, and requests the Department to continue to enhance its working relationship with the Office of the President of the General Assembly;

13. *Encourages* continued collaboration between the Department of Public Information and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in the promotion of culture and in the fields of education and communication, bridging the existing gap between the developed and the developing countries;

14. *Notes with appreciation* the efforts of the Department of Public Information to work at the local level with other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to enhance the coordination of their communications activities, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-third session on progress achieved in this regard and on the activities of the United Nations Communications Group;

15. *Reaffirms* that the Department of Public Information must prioritize its work programme, while respecting existing mandates and in line with regulation 5.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation,[10] to focus its message and better concentrate its efforts and to match its programmes with the needs of its target audiences, on the basis of improved feedback and evaluation mechanisms;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to exert all efforts to ensure that publications and other information services of the Secretariat, including the United Nations website and the United Nations News Service, contain comprehensive, balanced, objective and equitable information in all official languages about the issues before the Organization and that they maintain editorial independence, impartiality, accuracy and full consistency with resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly;

17. *Requests* the Department of Public Information and content-providing offices of the Secretariat to ensure that United Nations publications are produced in a cost-effective and environmentally friendly manner and to continue to coordinate

[9] A/AC.198/2010/2-4.
[10] ST/SGB/2000/8.

closely with all other entities, including all other departments of the Secretariat and funds and programmes of the United Nations system, in order to avoid duplication, within their respective mandates, in the issuance of United Nations publications;

18. *Emphasizes* that the Department of Public Information should maintain and improve its activities in the areas of special interest to developing countries and, where appropriate, other countries with special needs, and that the activities of the Department should contribute to bridging the existing gap between the developing and the developed countries in the crucial field of public information and communications;

19. *Notes* the issuance of daily press releases, and reiterates its request to the Department of Public information to continue to improve their production process, keeping in mind the views expressed by Member States, including their views on expanding them to the other official languages, among others, through cost-neutral cooperative arrangements with academic institutions;

Multilingualism and public information

20. *Emphasizes* the importance of making appropriate use and ensuring equitable treatment of all the official languages of the United Nations in all the activities of the Department of Public Information, including in presentations to the Committee on Information, with the aim of eliminating the disparity between the use of English and the five other official languages;

21. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to ensure that the Department of Public Information has appropriate staffing capacity in all the official languages of the United Nations to undertake all its activities and to include this aspect in future programme budget proposals for the Department, bearing in mind the principle of parity of all six official languages, while respecting the workload in each official language;

22. *Welcomes* the ongoing efforts of the Department of Public Information to enhance multilingualism in all its activities, and stresses the importance of ensuring that the texts of all new public United Nations documents in all six official languages, information materials and all older United Nations documents are made available through the United Nations website and are accessible to Member States without delay, and further stresses the importance of fully implementing its resolution 63/306;

Bridging the digital divide

23. *Recalls with satisfaction* its resolution 60/252 of 27 March 2006, in which it endorsed the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society,[11] as adopted at the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005, and proclaimed 17 May annual World Information Society Day, recalls the adoption of the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action[12] at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003, and in this regard requests the Department of Public Information to contribute to the celebration of this event and to play a role in raising awareness of the possibilities that the use of the Internet and other information and communications technologies can bring to societies and economies, as well as of ways to bridge the digital divide;

[11] See A/60/687.

[12] See A/C.2/59/3, annex.

24. *Calls upon* the Department of Public Information to contribute to raising the awareness of the international community of the importance of the implementation of the outcome documents of the World Summit on the Information Society;

Network of United Nations information centres

25. *Emphasizes* the importance of the network of United Nations information centres in enhancing the public image of the United Nations and in disseminating messages on the United Nations to local populations, especially in developing countries;

26. *Welcomes* the work done by the network of United Nations information centres in favour of the publication of United Nations information materials and the translation of important documents into languages other than the official languages of the United Nations, encourages the network of United Nations information centres to continue to develop web pages in local languages, and the Department of Public Information to provide necessary resources and technical facilities, with a view to reaching the widest possible spectrum of audiences and extending the United Nations message to all the corners of the world in order to strengthen international support for the activities of the Organization, and encourages the continuation of efforts in this regard;

27. *Stresses* the importance of rationalizing the network of United Nations information centres, and, in this regard, requests the Secretary-General to continue to make proposals in this direction, including through the redeployment of resources where necessary, and to report to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions;

28. *Reaffirms* that the rationalization of United Nations information centres must be carried out on a case-by-case basis in consultation with all concerned Member States in which existing information centres are located, the countries served by those information centres and other interested countries in the region, taking into consideration the distinctive characteristics of each region;

29. *Recognizes* that the network of United Nations information centres, especially in developing countries, should continue to enhance its impact and activities, including through strategic communications support, and calls upon the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of this approach to the Committee on Information at its successive sessions;

30. *Encourages* the Department of Public Information, through the information centres, to strengthen its cooperation with all other United Nations entities at the country level, in order to enhance coherence in communications and to avoid duplication of work;

31. *Stresses* the importance of taking into account the special needs and requirements of developing countries in the field of information and communications technology for the effective flow of information in those countries;

32. *Also stresses* that the Department of Public Information, through the network of United Nations information centres, should continue to promote public awareness of and mobilize support for the work of the United Nations at the local level, bearing in mind that information in local languages has the strongest impact on local populations;

33. *Further stresses* the importance of efforts to strengthen the outreach activities of the United Nations to those Member States remaining outside the network of United Nations information centres, and encourages the Secretary-General, within the context of rationalization, to extend the services of the network of United Nations information centres to those Member States;

34. *Stresses* that the Department of Public Information should continue to review the allocation of both staff and financial resources to the United Nations information centres in developing countries, emphasizing the needs of the least developed countries;

35. *Takes note* of the proposal by the Secretary-General to work closely with the Governments concerned to explore the possibility of identifying rent-free premises, while taking into account the economic condition of the host countries and bearing in mind that such support should not be a substitute for the full allocation of financial resources for the information centres in the context of the programme budget of the United Nations, and encourages host countries to respond to the needs of the United Nations information centres;

36. *Also takes note* of the strengthening of the information centres in Cairo, Mexico City and Pretoria, and encourages the Secretary-General to explore the strengthening of other centres, especially in Africa, in cooperation with the Member States concerned and within existing resources;

37. *Welcomes* General Assembly resolution 64/243 of 24 December 2009, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations information centre in Luanda as a contribution towards addressing the needs of Portuguese-speaking African countries, reiterates its request to the Secretary-General, in coordination with the Government of Angola, to take the necessary measures for the prompt establishment of the information centre, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-third session on the progress made in this regard;

38. *Encourages* the Secretary-General, when appointing directors to the United Nations information centres, to fully consider, inter alia, the experience of candidates in the field of information and communications technology, as one of the highly desirable appointment criteria;

III
Strategic communications services

39. *Reaffirms* the role of the strategic communications services in devising and disseminating United Nations messages by developing communications strategies, in close collaboration with the substantive departments, United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, in full compliance with their legislative mandates;

Promotional campaigns

40. *Appreciates* the work of the Department of Public Information in promoting, through its campaigns, issues of importance to the international community, such as the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the progress made in implementing the internationally agreed development goals, United Nations reform, the eradication of poverty, conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peacebuilding,

sustainable development, disarmament, decolonization, human rights, including the rights of women and children and of persons with disabilities, strategic coordination in humanitarian relief, especially in natural disasters and other crises, HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other diseases, the needs of the African continent, combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, dialogue among civilizations, the culture of peace and tolerance and the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, as well as prevention of genocide, and requests the Department, in cooperation with the countries concerned and with the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, to continue to take appropriate measures to enhance world public awareness on all these issues;

41. *Commends* the role of the Department of Public Information in observing the annual International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, and looks forward to its further work in promoting the establishment of the permanent memorial to the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade;

42. *Stresses* the need to continue the renewed emphasis in support of Africa's development, in particular by the Department of Public Information, in order to promote awareness in the international community of the nature of the critical economic and social situation in Africa and of the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development;[13]

43. *Recalls* its resolution 64/253 of 23 February 2010, in which it recognized 21 March as the International Day of Nowruz and, inter alia, invited interested Member States, the United Nations and interested international and regional organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations, to participate in events organized by States where Nowruz is celebrated, and in this regard requests the Department of Public Information, while ensuring the pertinence and relevance of subjects for promotional campaigns under this issue, to contribute to the celebration of Nowruz and to play a role in raising awareness of this event within existing resources;

44. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to raise awareness of 21 February as International Mother Language Day, which is being observed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and Member States throughout the world in a befitting manner;

45. *Recalls* its resolution 64/236 of 24 December 2009, in which it decided to organize, in 2012, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, and in this context requests the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to take appropriate measures to raise awareness and disseminate information on the Conference and relevant sustainable development issues;

46. *Also recalls* its resolution 64/13 of 10 November 2009, in which it designated 18 July as Nelson Mandela International Day and invited all Member States and organizations of the United Nations system to observe the Day in an appropriate manner, and in this regard, requests the Department of Public Information to contribute to creation of awareness, promotion and observance by the United Nations of the Day within existing resources;

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[13] A/57/304, annex.

47. *Requests* the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres to raise awareness and disseminate information within existing resources on the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 on the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;

48. *Also requests* the Department of Public Information and its network of United Nations information centres, in the context of General Assembly resolution 64/137 of 18 December 2009, to raise awareness on issues related to women and peace and security, within existing resources;

Role of the Department of Public Information in United Nations peacekeeping operations

49. *Requests* the Secretariat to continue to ensure the involvement of the Department of Public Information from the planning stage of future peacekeeping operations through interdepartmental consultations and coordination with other departments of the Secretariat, in particular with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support;

50. *Requests* the Department of Public Information, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support to continue their cooperation in raising awareness of the new realities, far-reaching successes and challenges faced by peacekeeping operations, especially multidimensional and complex ones, and the recent surge in United Nations peacekeeping activities, and welcomes efforts by the three Departments to develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy on current challenges facing United Nations peacekeeping;

51. *Stresses* the importance of enhancing the public information capacity of the Department of Public Information in the field of peacekeeping operations and its role, in close cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, in the process of selecting public information staff for United Nations peacekeeping operations or missions, and in this regard, invites the Department of Public Information to second public information staff who have the skills necessary to fulfil the tasks of the operations or missions, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical distribution in accordance with Chapter XV, Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and to consider views expressed, especially by host countries, when appropriate, in this regard;

52. *Emphasizes* the importance of the peacekeeping gateway on the United Nations website, and requests the Department of Public Information to continue its efforts in supporting the peacekeeping missions to further develop their websites;

53. *Requests* the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to continue to cooperate in implementing an effective outreach programme to explain the zero-tolerance policy of the Organization regarding sexual exploitation and abuse and to inform the public of the outcome of all such cases involving peacekeeping personnel, including cases where allegations are ultimately found to be legally unproven, and also to inform the public of the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations Comprehensive Strategy

on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Staff and Related Personnel;[14]

Role of the Department of Public Information in strengthening dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace as means of enhancing understanding among nations

54. *Recalls* its resolutions on dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace,[15] requests the Department of Public Information, while ensuring the pertinence and relevance of subjects for promotional campaigns under this issue, to continue to provide the support necessary for the dissemination of information pertaining to dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace, as well as the initiative on the Alliance of Civilizations, and to take due steps in fostering the culture of dialogue among civilizations and promoting cultural understanding, tolerance, respect for and freedom of religion or belief and effective enjoyment by all of all human rights and civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development;

55. *Invites* the United Nations system, especially the Department of Public Information, to continue to encourage and facilitate dialogue among civilizations and to formulate ways and means to promote dialogue among civilizations in the activities of the United Nations in various fields, taking into account the Programme of Action of the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations,[16] and in this regard, looks forward to the report of the Secretary-General requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 60/4 of 20 October 2005, and also welcomes the decision of the President of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly to hold an informal thematic debate on this issue in 2010;

56. *Recognizes* the achievements of the Alliance of Civilizations and the efforts made by the High Representative of the Secretary-General for the Alliance of Civilizations, which were welcomed by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/14 of 10 November 2009, takes note of the broad range of initiatives and partnerships in the areas of youth, education, the media and migration launched at the third Alliance of Civilizations Forum, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 28 and 29 May 2010, and welcomes the continued support of the Department of Public Information for the work of the Alliance of Civilizations, including its ongoing projects;

IV
News services

57. *Stresses* that the central objective of the news services implemented by the Department of Public Information is the timely delivery of accurate, objective and balanced news and information emanating from the United Nations system in all four mass media, namely, print, radio, television and the Internet, to the media and other audiences worldwide, with the overall emphasis on multilingualism, and reiterates its request to the Department to ensure that all news-breaking stories and news alerts are accurate, impartial and free of bias;

58. *Emphasizes* the importance of the Department of Public Information continuing to draw the attention of world media to stories that do not obtain

[14] Resolution 62/214, annex.

[15] Resolutions 52/15, 53/22, 53/25, 55/23, 56/6, 59/142 and 60/4.

[16] Resolution 56/6, sect. B.

prominent coverage, through the initiative entitled "10 Stories the World Should Hear More About" and through video and audio coverage by United Nations Television and United Nations Radio;

Traditional means of communication

59. *Welcomes* the initiative of United Nations Radio, which remains one of the most effective and far-reaching traditional media available to the Department of Public Information and an important instrument in United Nations activities, to enhance its live radio broadcasting service by making more frequently updated reports in all six official languages and features available to broadcasters on a daily basis on all United Nations activities, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to make every effort to achieve parity in the six official languages in United Nations Radio productions;

60. *Also welcomes* the ongoing efforts being made by the Department of Public Information to disseminate programmes directly to broadcasting stations all over the world in the six official languages, with the addition of Portuguese and Kiswahili, as well as in other languages where possible;

61. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to continue building partnerships with local, national and regional broadcasters to extend the United Nations message to all the corners of the world in an accurate and impartial way, and requests the Radio and Television Service of the Department to continue to take full advantage of the technological infrastructure made available in recent years;

United Nations website

62. *Reaffirms* that the United Nations website is an essential tool for the media, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, Member States and the general public, and in this regard, reiterates the continued need for efforts by the Department of Public Information to maintain and improve it;

63. *Recognizes* the efforts made by the Department of Public Information to implement the basic accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities to access the United Nations website, and calls upon the Department to continue to work towards compliance with accessibility requirements on all new and updated pages of the website, with the aim of ensuring its accessibility for persons with different kinds of disabilities;

64. *Takes note* of the fact that the multilingual development and enrichment of the United Nations website has improved,[17] and in this regard, requests the Department of Public Information, in coordination with content-providing offices, to further improve the actions taken to achieve full parity among the six official languages on the United Nations website, and especially reiterates its request to ensure the adequate distribution of financial and human resources within the Department allocated to the United Nations website among all official languages, taking into consideration the specificity of each official language;

65. *Recognizes* the cooperative arrangements undertaken by the Department of Public Information with academic institutions to increase the number of web pages available in some official languages, and reiterates its urgent request to the

[17] See A/AC.198/2007/3.

Secretary-General to extend those arrangements to all the official languages of the United Nations;

66. *Recalls* paragraph 74 of its resolution 60/109 B, and in this regard, reiterates that all content-providing offices in the Secretariat should continue their efforts to translate into all official languages all English-language materials and databases posted on the United Nations website and to make them available on the respective language websites in the most practical, efficient and cost-effective manner;

67. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take full advantage of new developments in information technology in order to improve, in a cost-effective manner, the expeditious dissemination of information on the United Nations, in accordance with the priorities established by the General Assembly in its resolutions and taking into account the linguistic diversity of the Organization, welcomes the continuing growth in the popularity of the e-mail news alerts service provided by the Department of Public Information on the United Nations News Centre portal in English and French, and encourages the Department to consult with the Office of Information and Communications Technology and to explore, as a matter of priority, ways of upgrading the technical capabilities of the service and providing it in all official languages;

68. *Recognizes* that some official languages use non-Latin and bidirectional scripts and that technological infrastructures and supportive applications in the United Nations are based on Latin script, which leads to difficulties in processing non-Latin and bidirectional scripts, and urges the Office of Information and Communications Technology to further collaborate with the Department of Public Information and to continue its efforts to ensure that technological infrastructures and supportive applications in the United Nations fully support Latin, non-Latin and bidirectional scripts in order to enhance the equality of all official languages on the United Nations website;

V
Library services

69. *Calls upon* the Department of Public Information to continue to lead the Steering Committee for the Modernization and Integrated Management of United Nations Libraries, and further commends the steps taken by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and the other member libraries of the Steering Committee to align their activities, services and outputs more closely with the goals, objectives and operational priorities of the Organization;

70. *Reiterates* the need to maintain a multilingual collection of books, periodicals and other materials in hard copy, accessible to Member States, ensuring that the Library continues to be a broadly accessible resource for information about the United Nations and its activities;

71. *Calls upon* the Department of Public Information, recognizing the importance of audio-visual archives in preserving our common heritage, to continue to examine its policies and activities regarding the durable preservation of its radio, television, film and photographic archives and to take action in ensuring that the archives are preserved and are accessible, including in the context of the construction work of the capital master plan within the overall budget of the plan;

72. *Takes note* of the initiative taken by the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, in its capacity as the focal point, to expand the scope of the regional training and knowledge-sharing workshops organized for the depository libraries in developing countries to include outreach in their activities;

73. *Acknowledges* the role of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library in enhancing knowledge-sharing and networking activities to ensure access to the vast store of United Nations knowledge for delegates, permanent missions of Member States, the Secretariat, researchers and depository libraries worldwide;

VI
Outreach services

74. *Also acknowledges* that the outreach services provided by the Department of Public Information continue to work towards promoting awareness of the role and work of the United Nations;

75. *Welcomes* the educational outreach activities of the Department of Public Information, through the United Nations Works programme and the Global Teaching and Learning Project, to reach educators and young people worldwide via a range of multimedia platforms, and encourages the United Nations Works programme to continue to develop further its partnerships with global media networks and celebrity advocates and the Global Teaching and Learning Project to further expand its activities to teachers and students in primary, intermediate and secondary schools;

76. *Notes* the importance of the continued implementation by the Department of Public Information of the ongoing programme for broadcasters and journalists from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, as mandated by the General Assembly, and requests the Department to consider how best to maximize the benefits derived from the programme by extending, inter alia, its duration and the number of its participants;

77. *Welcomes* the movement towards educational outreach and the orientation of the *UN Chronicle*, both print and online editions, and to this end, encourages the *UN Chronicle* to continue to develop co-publishing partnerships, collaborative educational activities and events with civil society organizations and institutions of higher learning;

78. *Requests* the Department of Public Information to continue the publication of the *UN Chronicle* with a view to improving it further within existing resources and to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-third session on progress in this matter, and reiterates its request to submit options for publishing the *UN Chronicle* in all six official languages;

79. *Takes note* of the efforts undertaken by the Department of Public Information in organizing exhibitions on important United Nations-related issues, within existing mandates, at United Nations Headquarters and at other United Nations offices as a useful tool for reaching out to the general public, reaffirms the important role that guided tours play as a means of reaching out to the general public, and requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to ensure that the guided tours provided at United Nations Headquarters and other United Nations duty stations are consistently available, in accordance with their income-generating nature, in particular in all the United Nations official languages;

80. *Also takes note* of the ongoing efforts of the Department of Public Information to strengthen its role as a focal point for two-way interaction with civil society relating to the priorities and concerns of the Organization identified by Member States;

81. *Commends*, in a spirit of cooperation, the United Nations Correspondents Association for its ongoing activities and for its Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Scholarship Fund, which sponsors journalists from developing countries to come to the United Nations Headquarters and report on the activities during the General Assembly, and further encourages the international community to continue its financial support for the Fund;

82. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts and contribution of United Nations Messengers of Peace, Goodwill Ambassadors and other advocates to promote the work of the United Nations and to enhance international public awareness of its priorities and concerns, and calls upon the Department of Public Information to continue to involve them in its communications and media strategies and outreach activities;

VII
Final remarks

83. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-third session and to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session on the activities of the Department of Public Information and on the implementation of all recommendations and requests contained in the present resolution;

84. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to make every effort to ensure that the level of services provided by the Department of Public Information is maintained throughout the period of the implementation of the capital master plan;

85. *Takes note* of the initiative taken by the Department of Public Information, in cooperation with the Department of Safety and Security and the Protocol and Liaison Service, during the general debate of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, to issue special identification stickers to press officers of Member States to enable them to escort media covering the visits of high-level officials to restricted areas, and strongly urges the Secretary-General to continue to improve this practice by acceding to the request by Member States to provide the needed number of additional passes to press officers of Member States to allow their access to all areas that are deemed restricted, in order to effectively and comprehensively report on high-level meetings that include officials of delegations of Member States;

86. *Requests* the Committee on Information to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session;

87. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-sixth session the item entitled "Questions relating to information".

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